

if he can give a reason  
he does not; if he can't,  
there isn't  
any.

strange and invisible arrangements are  
made and his books and paintings are  
auctioned off  
but no new work has appeared in  
years.

but they can't understand his  
silence--  
if he is dead  
they want to know it, if he is  
insane they want to know it, if he has a  
reason...

they walk past his house  
write letters  
ring.  
they cannot understand  
it.

I rather like  
it.

### Ice

swine under the purple moon in  
platinum curlers,  
lilac leaves beneath the flea  
tree,  
bum beneath the honeymoon tree,  
barber with the shakes,  
photo of Tom Mix,  
dirty underwear of sweet little  
girls,  
thin wire about a chicken coop,  
the beard of Castro  
the bread of Communion,  
DiMaggio lighting a cigarette in Oakland  
as through the streets  
lady torturers shake their priceless  
bungholes;  
the Kennedy deaths now like old gangster  
movies, the real-estators shall  
inherit--  
who will bury the undertaker?  
who will swallow the geek?  
who will scrub my kitchen  
floor?

I went to a hockey game the other  
night  
trying to measure and decipher  
victory and defeat and  
exultation; when the game was over  
we walked to the parking lot  
got into your cars and  
drove away as  
meaningless as  
ever.

-- Charles Bukowski

Los Angeles, CA

Journey

In case of  
accident a bookshelf  
is missing out of  
nowhere comes  
a rocking rigid horse  
machine in front  
of a grocery store  
with no child riding  
carrying an unseen  
visitor to  
          noplac.

Heritage

Born in California by  
mistake  
I am of Nebraska  
they brought me back  
at six months stayed  
awhile moved  
to Colorado left  
me I am realistic  
about  
the anger.

The Dream

I had a child  
in a dream  
In sin.  
The birth was easy,  
the child small.  
I took it home  
and bathing it, dropped it.  
The rigid shell of skin  
shattered and it died.  
I picked up the face--  
smiling and, in death as  
it was in sleep, open-eyed.  
It looked like a doll I'd had when I was six  
which my father had bought me  
when my sister was born.